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News Release

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Annual March For Meals Observance Kicks Off In Davis County

"More Than a Meal" National Research Study shows impact of meal service delivery on the health and well-being of adults 60 years of age and older

(Clearfield, Utah) – Davis County's Meals on Wheels program joins a nationwide celebration of local Meals on Wheels programs throughout the month of March. This year's March For Meals observance is marked by the release of significant findings from a Meals on Wheels America commissioned research study.

"Research studies are always welcome," said Kristy Cottrell, director of the Family Health & Senior Services Division for the Davis County Health Department. "This study confirms what we have always known – the Meals on Wheels program provides a vital service necessary to many frail homebound seniors. The program provides benefits beyond a nutritious meal. It helps socially, mentally, physically and financially."

Meals on Wheels America contracted Brown University's Center for Gerontology and Healthcare Research with funding from AARP Foundation to design and execute the 15-week pilot study involving more than 600 senior participants. The study compared the experience and health outcomes realized by older adults who receive three different levels of service: daily traditional meal delivery, once-weekly frozen meal delivery and individuals on a waiting list for meals.

Key findings include:

- Those receiving and/or requesting Meals on Wheels services are significantly more vulnerable compared to a nationally representative sample of aging Americans.
- Those who received daily-delivered meals experienced the greatest improvements in health and quality of life indicators over the study period compared to the other two groups (individuals who received frozen, weekly-delivered meals and the control group).
- Those receiving daily-delivered meals reported greater benefits from their home-delivered meal experience compared to the group receiving frozen meals.
- Those who lived alone and received daily-delivered meals were more likely to report decreases in worry about being able to remain in home and improvements in feelings of isolation and loneliness over the study period, compared to the other two groups.

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According to Ellie Hollander, President and CEO of Meals on Wheels America, “We have the research-backed evidence that confirms what we’ve all known for decades anecdotally through personal experience: that Meals on Wheels does in fact deliver so much more than just a meal.”

For more information about the More Than a Meal research study, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/MTAM. Also, visit www.marchformeals.com to learn more about the nationwide March for Meals celebration.

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About Davis County Meals on Wheels Program

Davis County Meals on Wheels Program helps older people remain independent in their homes by providing a nutritious meal each weekday to qualified homebound individuals unable to handle their own meal preparation. Volunteers deliver approximately 350 meals daily using county vehicles driving a set delivery route. For many of these homebound individuals, these deliveries may be the only human contact they have and the only meal they eat that day. More information is available at http://www.daviscountyutah.gov/health/family_health/senior_services/home_delivered_meals/default.cfm.

About Meals on Wheels America (Formerly Meals On Wheels Association of America)

Meals on Wheels America is the oldest and largest national organization supporting the more than 5,000 community-based senior nutrition programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior isolation and hunger. This network exists in virtually every community in America and, along with more than two million volunteers, delivers the nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that enable America’s seniors to live nourished lives with independence and dignity. By providing funding, leadership, education and advocacy support, Meals on Wheels America empowers its local member programs to strengthen their communities, one senior at a time. For more information, or to find a Meals on Wheels provider near you, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org.